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THE  
COMMERCIAL DESTINY  
OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY;  
A LECTURE.

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BY L. U. REAVIS.

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"The Valley of the Mississippi is the chosen seat of population, product and power on this continent."—Gen. N. P. Banks.

"It is a shame that Great Britain should scoop up the commerce of the West India Islands. It is a shame that France and Great Britain should take possession of South America. These territories open their markets for you and for us, who are their nearest and most easily reaching neighbors, and it is part of the task of the future for St. Louis to send out her enterprise, to send down her steamers and ships and take possession of the commerce of South America."—Henry Ward Beecher, "on 'Change.'"

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ST. LOUIS, MO.:

WOODWARD, TIERNAN & HALE, PRINTERS, 212 LOCUST STREET.

1878.





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TO  
JAMES H. BROOKMIRE,

A MAN

WHO, GIFTED WITH RARE MENTAL QUALITIES, HAS BY  
AN INHERENT FORCE OF CHARACTER WOVEN FROM HIS OWN ORGAN-  
IZATION A LIFE OF USEFULNESS AND DISTINCTION;

AN INVENTOR,

WHO WITH MARKED GENIUS HAS GIVEN  
TO LABOR AN INVENTION THAT ABRIDGES TIME AND CONTRIBUTES  
VALUE AND REPUTATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY;

A MERCHANT,

WHO BY WELL DIRECTED EFFORTS HAS ATTAINED TO THE  
FIRST RANK IN MERCANTILE PURSUITS, AND STANDS WITHOUT A PEER  
AMONG THE MERCHANTS OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY;

A CITIZEN,

WHO WITH COMMERCIAL VIEWS AS BROAD  
AS THOSE HEREIN PRESENTED AND AN ENERGY AND A LIBERALITY  
TO PROMOTE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT;

ARE THESE PAGES RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR



## NOTICE.

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This lecture was prepared with the full consciousness that the line of discussion and the object for which it was made, not only indicated a new commercial era for the people of the great basin of the Mississippi, but also for the Western Hemisphere. I fully saw at the time of writing, as I believed, the rapid approach of an entire reorganization of commerce on this continent, or in other words, a reorganization of the lines of trade in the valley of the Mississippi, and the early necessity for the people, the productive people, of this valley seeking new markets southward, in zones and climates which they do not possess.

To my mind the events of succeeding years afford increased evidence of the correctness of the doctrine presented in the lecture.

Several times since its delivery I have solicited river men and commercial men to print it in pamphlet form for more permanent use, and send it out over the valley to the press and commercial men, for the purpose of cultivating a wide-spread conviction in favor of the correctness of the principles laid down, and the necessity of promoting trade with equatorial America. In vain did I look for support for its publication and distribution until very recently. I submitted it to the reading of Mr. James H. Brookmire, of the well known grocery house of Brookmire & Ranken, of this city, who, though young, is one of the leading merchants in the great valley of the Mississippi, and whose purchases come mostly from the South, and much of which comes from South America. He, with an unusual enterprise and sagacity, at once saw the importance of giving the doctrines herein contained a wide circulation, consented to appropriate from his own private means a sum sufficient to print and circulate a large number of the lecture, to be distributed over this country, the West Indies, and South America.

As a grateful recognition of the enterprise displayed by Mr. Brookmire, as well as personal regard, I have inscribed the compliment of the publication to him, with the ardent wish that we had many more such enterprising men in the Valley of the Mississippi.

In the belief that the lecture will meet the hearty approval of the active and thinking men of both continents and their islands, I submit it in the interest of a great and growing commercial future.

L. U. R.

*St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 8, '78.*



## EXTRACTS.

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The Mississippi is mighty in his imperial dignity, but more mighty in his lesson of unity and confederation. That matchless tide is the magic Cestus which insures the harmony of the sovereign sisters of the Union, and no peevish eruption of unsisterly jealousy can dispart the silvery zone that so firmly and graciously binds their varied climes and products into one common interest. The Mississippi is the most persuasive mediator, the most energetic arbiter, and the most vigilant defender of the federal compact.—*Cora Montgomery.*

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### THE WEST THE SEAT OF EMPIRE.

“Jealous of the South! Such would not be my theme, if the demon of sectionalism had so far possessed itself of me. I should not strive to draw the only real danger of a sectional nature which threatens, and to fasten her attention upon an imaginary one. Nor by the comparatively small section of the Union lying between Mason and Dixon’s Line and the Gulf of Mexico, is the sceptre of the power in this Union to be held hereafter; but by those vast regions of the West, State after State stretching out like star beyond star in the blue depths of the firmament, far away to the shores of the Pacific. What is the power of the Old Thirteen, North or South, compared with that of the mighty West? There is the seat of empire, and there is the hand of imperial power. Tell me not of the perils of the slave power and the encroachments of the South. Massachusetts and South Carolina will together be as clay in the fingers of the potter, when the great West shall stretch forth its arm of power, as ere long it will, to command the destiny of the Union.”—*Caleb Cushing.*

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### WHERE REAVIS WORSHIPS.

Reavis is not a handsome man, and not especially good-natured. He sometimes gets awfully angry and writes very savagely and very unwisely. But Reavis has a big, ugly head on his great, brawny shoulders, full of curious conceits and grand ideas, now and then tumbled about in unutterable confusion in the great, ruddy, glowing cranium of the redoubtable Reavis. He is pugnacious, and obstinate and original. He won’t adopt anybody’s ideas, and is in a towering passion when everybody don’t swallow his own. He startles people by his industriously collected facts and figures, and can make a man’s head swim who contemplates the sea of glory over which Reavis guides the barque freighted with St. Louis’ glory and fortunes. Reavis believes in the Mississippi. Some people are sun-worshippers, but Reavis is a Western rather than an Oriental idolater, prostrating himself in humble adoration before the splendid majesty of the “Father of floods.” This is a Memphis deity, and, since Memphis and Reavis worship in the same temple, and bend reverently before the same idol, it would be well for Reavis to preach in this city. The hall of the Chamber of Commerce will be crowded on any evening that the giant, who bears the destiny of St. Louis in the hollow of his hand, chooses to appear.—*Memphis Appeal.*





THE  
COMMERCIAL DESTINY  
OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen:—*

We are entering upon a new century in the life of our nation. The years of our traditionary and colonial history have rolled away into the past. A century has passed since our fathers issued the Declaration of American Independence.

During that long stretch of years our people, as a nation, have tested many social and political problems, which they were compelled to confront. In many instances they made mistakes, but in the main, both the Republic and the people have profited by the experience through which they have passed.

Now, closing our eyes upon the factional strife and bloody conflict from which the nation has recently emerged, and purifying our hearts after the great sacrifice of humanity made upon the altar of the Republic, let us turn from a decade of war, and look forward to an era of peace and prosperity, now dawning upon our country. Such an era is just before us, and we stand face to face with it. As it comes we shall be compelled to confront new and peculiar questions, be called upon to solve new industrial, commercial, social and political problems, greater than those of the past. And if we do not look forward to their coming, and study to comprehend their importance to the general welfare of the whole people, we shall fail to keep pace with the onward progress of the new century. On the other hand, if we meet

the new questions of the future in due time, and discuss them with earnestness and wisdom, it will be the high prerogative of the inhabitants of North America to lead the great progressive column of the world's people into new fields of industrial activity and thought. I therefore entreat you to look well to the future, and if possible, discover what achievements are in store for our people. I earnestly entreat you to take high ground on the side of progress; and by progress I now mean the adaptation of things and principles to their best uses. To announce one of the questions relating to the national welfare of the people of the grand valley of the Mississippi, which demands immediate consideration, and to indicate its importance, is the purpose for which I stand before you to-day. Nine years ago, when I first began to devote some special thought to the great questions of the West, I became convinced that for our people to achieve the highest ends of industrial and commercial life on this continent, the efforts of civilization must conform to the essential and distinctive features of nature, as marked by the physical formation of the continent.

An examination of the subject reveals the fact that the mountains and their domains have a mission to subserve for the civilization of North America, essentially their own, and that the rivers, with the domain of the interior basin of the continent, have a mission to subserve, essentially *their* own, in the expanding growth of human power upon the wide area penetrated by their numberless tributaries. For in this country, as in all others, the character of the civilization must conform, in a great degree, to the character of the distinguishing topographical features which mark the surface of the continent. The mountain ranges, the boundless prairies, the plateaus and pastoral lands, the rivers and the lakes, will each produce types of civilization peculiar to themselves, yet essential to the unification of our continental civilization. The two great slopes of North America, the Atlantic and Pacific, will produce a civilization in many respects peculiar to the topographical character of each. So, too, will the Mississippi Basin be distinguished by many features of civilization peculiar to itself.

Planting ourselves upon these fundamental truths founded in nature, we can easily survey the wide domain of North America,

and with one sweep of the mind determine what are to be the distinguishing pursuits of the inhabitants destined to reside upon either of the slopes, and in the great valley. And as easily can we define what industrial and commercial policies are best calculated to subserve the highest interests of the inhabitants of each physical division. Therefore, in view of these facts, I invite your attention to a consideration of the commercial destiny of the Mississippi Valley, as indicated by nature herself, in the physical formation of the continent. I have many times indulged the hope that when our people recovered from the embarrassments of the late civil war, they would instinctively turn their attention to the material development of the country, and thus afford greater opportunity for a full and free discussion of the many questions now presenting themselves for consideration.

It may well be laid down as a philosophical axiom, that everything has a destiny—an end to be achieved, by subserving in a special way the special purposes of existence. This must be regarded true of all things, animate or inanimate, physical and spiritual, whether of flowers and vines, of oceans and continents, of men and angels. To comprehend the destiny of those things with which the material interests of men are concerned, is an important function of human knowledge. And in proportion to the character and extent of a thing to subserve the necessities and interests of individuals and communities, is the importance of the destiny to be achieved.

Thus, when we come to consider the destiny of the Mississippi Valley, in any aspect of civilized life, we must, from the very nature of the case, regard it as one of vast importance to the future material prosperity of its inhabitants.

Its superlative size at once warrants such a conclusion, as the facts will demonstrate.

If we look to the river navigation of the continents, we find that the greatest river of Asia—the Obi—drains a valley containing 1,357,000 square miles. The largest river of Africa—the Nile—drains a valley containing 520,000 square miles. The greatest river of Europe—the Volga—drains a valley containing 400,000 square miles. The greatest river of South America—the Amazon

—drains a valley containing 2,000,000 square miles. The grandest river of North America—the Mississippi—drains a valley containing 2,455,350 square miles.

Thus it will be seen that the Mississippi Valley is the largest land formation of the kind on the globe. With its tributaries it extends through thirty degrees of longitude and twenty-three degrees of latitude, and embraces within its area all the essential climates of all the zones of the earth, and in conjunction with the productive power of this valley furnishes the market basis for the mightiest growth of commerce ever known to the world; hence, the commercial destiny of such a country must be great.

Our present purpose, then, is to consider the commercial destiny of this grand valley, or in other words, to consider the true commercial interests of the people of the Mississippi Valley, and how to achieve their best results by a wise regulation of commerce and traffic at home and abroad.

This is a work of no ordinary concern, for the commercial destiny of the valley, and as will be shown, involves an entire reorganization of traffic and commerce upon the continent, and the exchange of products through new channels and facilities, supported by public improvements that are not yet in the ascendancy, nor are they even considered by the general mind, which rarely looks beyond the present of its own time to ascertain what changes nature, and progress, will dictate in the future.

In this marvelous age of ours, it well becomes the actor in public affairs to look into the future, and discern, if possible, to what better condition of things, individuals, communities and states are rapidly tending, and apply wisdom to the things of the present, and compel them to subserve the better ends of life. If it be true that we can look wisely into the future and realize what it is destined to bring forth, who shall say that that knowledge may not be wisely applied to the uses of the present?

Heretofore the experience of our people has been such as to convince the most incredulous that the goal of their ambition and wealth was to be reached somewhere in the path of empire as it lies across the continent East and West. And such has been the rapid western march of the American pioneer, and such the

succeeding progress of the railway to the Pacific Ocean, that men have seemed for a time to forget that they must conform to nature, rather than with the implements of art become masters of nature. But we have only to question this mental blindness to expose its absurdity.

Man's mightiest achievements in every field of activity and thought have been more easily and truly won when his efforts were directed conjointly with nature herself, or in other words, when he more nearly co-operated with nature.

The water is more easily utilized in the channel of the river; the railway is better and easier built where nature has more nearly prepared the track.

It is, therefore, essential that we ascertain, as a necessary basis for the argument, whether it is possible for man, in the career of his progress, to transcend, in any important degree, the well-ordered arrangements of nature, for the direction of his industrial and commercial pursuits, and to point out the economic use of the commercial means destined to give character and activity to the future great interests of the people of the Mississippi Valley.

That man cannot in any great degree transcend the order of nature, and establish dominion, and go forward in the highway of progress, contrary to the unchangeable laws of gravitation and gain, must become evident to every one who will give the subject a moment's thought. Assuming that this general proposition is true, let us make the application.

Since the beginning of the migration of the human race upon the earth, man has been governed by two essential movements. The first has ever been westward along the zodiac of empire. Along the path of the first movement has grown up the controlling civilization of the human race. Along it the camel and the caravan traveled in Oriental lands. Along the seas adjacent to the land, the rude form of the ship sailed in ancient and modern times. Now the camel, the caravan and the ruder form of the ship are superseded by the railway and the ocean steamer; and yet the railway and the steamships do not transcend the order of nature, and change the natural course and character of human enterprise. The railway simply does the labor of the camel in



another form, and does not change any of the principles of human enterprise and action. The ship does upon the ocean what the railway does upon the land ; hence the same general laws of human interest and ambition govern mankind to-day that did four thousand years ago, and must continue to govern man's commercial interest.

The second essential movement of man upon the earth has ever been at right angles with the zodiac of empire, to the North and the South. From this second movement has been produced the greater portion of all the commerce and maritime wealth of the world. This movement has been the essential producer and exchanger of the products of man in all ages, and stimulated ambitious rulers to seek the rich trade of the tropics, through new channels, with which to build up their own empires.

If we go to the countries of Africa, of Asia, and of Europe, and trace the commercial movements of their peoples since the beginning of time, we will find in all their efforts but little variation from this general law which nature has prescribed, and to which all people have unerringly conformed. The operation of this law governing the commercial interests of mankind, is not only traced in the right-angular divergence of the race from the zodiac of empire, but is also discoverable in the natural tendency of man, in all the controlling commercial pursuits, to follow the flow of the waters toward the tropics, on all the continents. In this movement of man is to be found the most important operation of the law of commercial adventure upon the globe.

And this same unchangeable law—this law of human action conforming to the requirements of nature—must control the people of this great valley, and compel them to a destiny overruled by nature herself.

And as in all ages of the world, man upon the continents has followed the flow of those waters running to the tropical oceans, in search of markets for his own produce, and wealth for his aggrandizement, so will the people of this valley, in obedience to nature's provision, follow the flow of waters from the lakes to the gulf, and from thence will their ships go down to the sea, bearing their produce to the markets of the world, and in return

gather up the rich treasures of other lands and bear them home. It is true, as already stated, that in modern times a new agency has been introduced on the continents to facilitate commerce. I refer to the railway. But when we come to consider the economic use of the commercial means destined to give character and activity to the industrial interests of the people of this valley, it at once becomes evident that by the use of the railway, man can in no degree transcend the provisions of nature. Besides, the railways must yield to the superior and overruling influence of nature, and in their greater use, yield alike with man, and follow the flow of the waters to the tropical seas. It is therefore assumed as an incontrovertible fact—an unavoidable goal to which our people are rapidly hastening—that the commercial destiny of the Mississippi Valley must be achieved in harmony with nature; that the surplus products of the valley, designed for foreign trade, must follow the flow of the waters from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico, the Mediterranean of the New World. The people of this vast domain, from the water-sheds of the Alleghanies to the water-sheds of the Sierra Nevadas, must all yield to this universal law of nature and interest, and follow the flow of the waters of the innumerable rivers to the gulf stream. This must be the commercial destiny of the millions of people who now and henceforth inhabit the interior plain of the continent, and neither ambition nor conflicting interests can thwart them from an obedience to the plain and simple dictates of Nature. Nor will this people be deflected from their destiny, and compelled or inclined to pass over either range of mountains, the Alleghanies or Sierra Nevadas, to seek the markets of the world from the shores of the Atlantic or Pacific oceans. Cheaper freights on the one hand will compel the products of the valley to the gulf, and a rigorous climate, on the other hand, will contribute to the same end.

I have stated that the surplus products of the Mississippi Valley destined for foreign markets, must follow the flow of the waters of the Mississippi and its tributaries, to the Gulf of Mexico, and from thence to the markets of the world. I base this statement upon three fundamental propositions.

I. That transportation by the rivers of the valley, to the gulf, will forever remain a necessity to which the present and future millions of inhabitants of the central plain of the continent must resort for the purpose of conveying their surplus products to the markets of the world.

II. That the products of the farms and factories of every part of the great valley can be transported cheaper by the rivers to the gulf, and thence to foreign markets, than can possibly be done to the Atlantic and Pacific seaboard, and from their ports to the markets of the world.

III. The future place of traffic for the people of the Mississippi Valley must be with the West India Islands, Central and South America.

These three propositions, demonstrated by facts that cannot be refuted, will reveal to the world the commercial destiny of the Mississippi Valley, as indicated by its topographical character, and call the attention of the people of North America who reside upon its great rivers to an interest and a duty that must henceforth command their united support.

That transportation by the rivers of the Valley to the gulf will become a necessity to the millions of people who now live and henceforth will reside in the central and upper portions of the Mississippi basin, there can be no manner of doubt, and if there was but one compelling cause for such a necessity, that cause alone would operate as an irrevocable decree in controlling the commerce of this great valley. The necessity to which I refer, and which is the first thought to direct the attention of the people of the Valley to the gulf as an outlet to the markets of the world, comes from the fact that it will be utterly impossible for the railroads of the country to take the produce of the farms and factories and foundries to market. Perhaps this statement may seem strange to some: nevertheless it is true, and requires but a single reflection to realize its truth. It is impossible to build within the bounds of interest and economy a sufficient number of railroads to take away to the gulf the products destined to accumulate from year to year on the upper rivers. There is neither money enough in the country to build the roads, nor would the investment be profitable if the



money could be obtained, for no capitalist can afford to invest their means to build roads that can only be supplied with business from three to six months during the twelve; hence, to limit the railways to such a number as to insure them profits on the cost of construction and maintenance, by the business they can do, will leave the people of the Valley of the Mississippi constantly burdened with their surplus products, unable to find a market save by the water lines to the gulf.

The present railroads of the country have cost more than \$4,000,000,000. They cannot to-day, with the rivers, do the freighting business of the country as prompt as the best interests of the people demand. In less than a generation the population of the Mississippi Valley will be more than 100,000,000, and its commerce more than tripled, and in no event will there be sufficient railway capacity to take to the oceans and the gulf the products of the people.

Turning to the rivers we find ample facility. They penetrate with navigable waters every part of the grand valley, and the one mighty river of the continent has a freighting capacity greater than all the railroads of the world! And while speed will necessarily draw the travel and light freights to the railroads, cheap rates will draw the heavy freights to the rivers, and thus will the railroads and the rivers each subserve their own best purposes in the industrial and commercial affairs of the country.

Passing to our second proposition, that the surplus products of the Mississippi Valley, designed for the markets of the world, can be transported cheaper by the water lines to the gulf than by any other way, is a fact as easily demonstrated as the simplest mathematical problem.

Experience has substantially settled the rates of freights by the various modes of transportation to be as follows: The transportation of one ton of freight costs by ocean, 1 1-4 mills per mile; by lake, 2 1-2 mills per mile; by river, 3 mills per mile; by canal, 10 mills per mile; by railway, 30 mills per mile.

Taking the above rates as a basis for the exchange of products between the markets of the different channels of communication, no difficulty lies in the way of establishing the truth of our

second proposition, which also carries with it a still greater inducement for the people of the valley to look toward the gulf for an outlet to foreign ports. Let us look at the facts. The distance from St. Paul to New York is 1,350 miles; at the foregoing rates it will cost a little more than 40 cents, exclusive of elevatorage, to ship one bushel of wheat from St. Paul to New York, by railroad; from New York to Liverpool, a distance of 3,200 miles, it will cost 12 1-4 cents to carry one bushel of wheat; therefore, from St. Paul by rail to New York, and from thence to Liverpool, it will cost 52 cents to export one bushel of wheat. From St. Paul to New Orleans, a distance of 1,993 miles, by river, it will cost a trifle more than 16 cents to ship one bushel of wheat, and from New Orleans to Liverpool, a distance of 4,950 miles, it will cost 15 cents to ship the same measure of wheat; in other words, it will cost 31 cents to export one bushel of wheat from St. Paul by the river and gulf route to Liverpool, thus making a difference of 21 cents on each bushel exported by the river and gulf route.

The same rate of difference in the cost of shipping wheat and other products of the valley, commands alike the consideration of the people in every locality throughout its wide domain. But the discussion does not stop here; it takes a wider and deeper range. If it is true that art and capital can improve railways, it is also true that science and capital can improve rivers, and this brings us to a great question of continental and national concern—the improvement of the Mississippi and its tributaries. There is no commercial and national question before the American people to-day half so important as that of improving the great rivers of the valley, so as to afford free and ample navigation for first class steamers from the Gulf of Mexico to Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Paul, and Omaha. In these railroad times, we occasionally hear men speak of the improvement of the rivers and their navigation as an old foggy notion. But men who talk thus can, with equal reason, call old foggy to plow and plant corn—a thing that was done in Egypt many thousand years ago. The one has ever been a necessity, the other an interest to promote the welfare of man. Referring, however, to the Mississippi River, its improve-

ment will be both a necessity and an interest to the future prosperity of our people; for if it be true that on account of cheaper freights it is to the interest of the people of the valley to send their surplus products by the water lines to the gulf, then they will be sent that way. And if it is to their still greater interest to improve the rivers, then the rivers will be improved. We have seen, according to the first proposition laid down, that the people of the valley will be compelled to continue the use of the rivers, by which to export the vast supplies of constantly accumulating products; for it will be utterly impossible, within the range of economy and profit, to provide sufficient railway facilities to carry to the gulf and the oceans the freights destined for foreign markets; therefore the improvement of the rivers comes as another necessity, coupled with the first proposition, and in vindication of the second.

If it be true that our people who reside in the grain, pork, and beef growing regions of the valley, must go to the rivers and follow the flow of the waters to the gulf with their products, and that by so doing, go to market at a less cost than by any other route, then is it not true that by a wise and sufficient improvement of the rivers, so as to utilize the waters as they flow to the seas, freights can be greatly reduced below their present rates? Most assuredly so. Then shall we not all join hands and efforts to secure the improvement of the rivers according to the dictates of science and the demands of commerce?

This is the central idea of the subject under discussion. It is the great commercial question for the people of the Mississippi Valley to solve. To improve the rivers of the interior basin of the continent, is a subject almost as old as that of improving the American harbors of the Atlantic ocean. In fact, it was the fear of Washington when young, that if the seaboard States did not make good roads from the head waters of the Mohawk and adjacent country, to afford easy communication to the seaboard, the people of the Western States would turn their attention down the Mississippi, to the gulf.

In 1783 Washington visited the Mohawk, and followed that river up to the summit which divides the waters flowing into Lake

Ontario from those flowing into the Hudson. The object of his visit was to examine into the condition and wants of the people. On his return he reported to the Governor of Virginia, and urged the necessity of making good roads, for the purpose of attracting the attention of the people of the Western States eastward. He said they had been looking down the Mississippi, and the touch of a feather would turn them either way.

Now more than 20,000,000 people are not only looking, but going down the Mississippi to the gulf, which they can reach more easily than the Atlantic or Pacific oceans. Their market and their commercial destiny is down the river. For this people to achieve their destiny in the highest degree, the Mississippi and its tributaries must be improved. There is not a navigable river in the Valley of the Mississippi that does not afford sufficient water for all the demands of commerce almost the entire year, if the water is utilized by its proper confinement to the channels of the respective streams. But the great question is the improvement of the Mississippi, into which all the others flow. That there is sufficient water in the Mississippi during all seasons of the year to render its navigation serviceable in the highest degree, when properly improved, there is no manner of doubt. Already it is the mightiest inland commercial thoroughfare in the world. At a less expense than would be required for any other public improvement of equal magnitude and importance, it can be made more than double its present value to the commerce, civilization and government of North America.

The character and extent of the improvements necessary to be made in the interests of a free and unrestricted commerce from St. Paul to the Gulf of Mexico, I leave for river men and engineering science to determine. It is my purpose only to indicate the commercial destiny of the people of the valley, to urge the importance of improving the river, and join hands with the people and demand of Congress to make the improvements. The commercial interest of the Mississippi Valley demands free and unrestricted navigation from St. Paul to the Gulf of Mexico. It demands that every wreck and snag that endangers the vessels that do the bidding of commerce be taken from the channel of

the river. It demands that the water be so utilized between St. Paul and the Gulf as to afford a sufficient depth in the channel during the entire year, for the different vessels engaged in different trades.

For myself, I am in favor of a uniform depth of twelve feet of water between St. Louis and New Orleans. This depth will admit sea-going vessels of from 1,300 to 1,400 tons—the same size vessels that England uses for carrying her mails to the West Indies, Aspinwall and Australia.

I am aware that many river men regard this as visionary and impracticable, and tell us that from six to eight feet of water is sufficient. I shall not be content with that depth, but insist that we demand twelve feet of water between St. Louis and New Orleans. River freights are almost three times higher than ocean freights, and if it is profitable for vessels to go upon the oceans, it is also equally profitable for them to run on inland waters, where the facilities are alike advantageous. But there is another reason why I am in favor of establishing a uniform depth of twelve feet between St. Louis and New Orleans. I look beyond to-day and see, in less than a century hence, 400,000,000 enterprising and intelligent American citizens residing in this great Valley of the Mississippi; I see this generation pass away; I see another come, inspired with new hopes and new ideas, with fresh systems of navigation and new modes of transacting business; I see a vast system of inter-oceanic navigation and commerce carried on in this country—ships arriving by the St. Lawrence and going out by the Mississippi; I see St. Louis, Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville and other great cities of the rivers made ports of entry; I see ships come from every part of the habitable globe to the great city of the world, and take of the choice products of the 400,000,000 people and go down to the sea laden for the markets of other lands; I see mighty cities, populous and powerful, spreading all over this great valley, centers of commerce and human activity; I see North America controlling the civilized world; and when I see all these things pass before my mind, I am admonished to urge such an improvement of the Mississippi river as will give an annual depth of twelve feet.



Besides, we shall not go far in the future before ships will be built upon the Mississippi that will traverse alike the rivers, the lakes, and the ocean with equal facility. They will be owned and run by capitalists and companies organized in the great cities on the rivers and lakes, like unto those of the seaboard cities. Ship-building will yet be an important branch of productive industry for river cities.

As to the cost of improving the Mississippi so as to have an annual depth of twelve feet from St. Louis to the Gulf of Mexico, I have consulted with an engineer in whose judgment I have confidence; he estimates the expense at from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000, if the money can be honestly expended, but \$100,000,000 if the steal is big. Some of you may regard this amount very large, but it is small in comparison with the magnitude and importance of the work. No other improvement, ancient or modern, relating to the special interest of commerce, has ever commanded the attention of man equal in importance to that of the Mississippi, so as to control its waters, and afford ample and free navigation from St. Paul to the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of 1,957 miles. Be it ever so much, what matters the cost if it falls infinitely below the profits to accrue, and if the work is cheaper than any other public improvement in the world? There is at least \$250,000,000 invested in railroads in the Mississippi Valley, and the amount will be swelled to \$5,000,000,000, and yet a thousand railroads are not equal to the Mississippi river. I would not undervalue the importance of railroads to commerce and civilization, but at best, as commercial thoroughfares, they can only be feeders to the rivers. They can gather the products of the land and take them to the rivers, the lakes, and the oceans, to be transported to distant markets, but never can they be made to subserve the uses of the rivers, the lakes, and the oceans. Each have a mission, a work to do in the grander growth of civilization upon the continent. There is room for all, there is use for all; and in the rapid strides for commercial achievements which our people are making, we must not improve the one at the expense of the other. Touching the subject of an imaginary contest between the rivers and the railways for the transportation of the products of the country, I

was surprised at reading the testimony of some of the citizens of St. Louis before the senatorial committee, that met at that city in November, 1873. Among other things stated by one of the men interrogated, is the following absurd declaration: "We all know," said the witness, "it to be the fact, that railroads have absorbed the enterprise and the capital of the country." I give the gentleman's own language, and, notwithstanding he says "we all know it," I for one don't know it at all. But I do know the very reverse to be true.

Instead of absorbing the enterprise of the country, instead of absorbing the capital of the country, railroads have made this gigantic land strong in material power and progress. They have developed incalculable wealth, and made the people of the nation vigorous and enterprising.

The arts have given nothing to the world equal to the railway, and be you Granger or demagogue, fool or fanatic, when you strike at the railway system of this country, in the name of a starved economy, you strike at the progress and commercial advancement of the world. Go, if you will, and check the blind Samson, you will die in the ruins of poverty made by your own hands.

But, while I would advocate railways, I do not mean to say that the men who control them, if misguided by bad motives, will not aggress on the rights of the people, as well as legislative assemblies and any other forms of organized power—I know they will do so. But the remedy against any public wrong is not to be found in mobs, strikes and class organizations. Such movements are always founded upon ignorance and selfishness, and prosecuted without regard to the rights of others.

There need be no war between the rivers and railways. Small-minded and mercenary men may talk of fogysm about the one, and the despotism of corporations of the other, but interest and wisdom will prescribe to each, in due time, its special and reciprocal use.

I am therefore in favor of the General Government appropriating from the national treasury a sufficient amount of money, \$100,000,000 if need be, to put the Mississippi river and its

navigable tributaries in first-class commercial order, and open the way to the gulf, free to the commerce of the great valley. Suppose it does cost \$50,000,000 or \$100,000,000? The people will be the gainers in less than five years after the work is done. Insurance will be reduced by removing the dangers to navigation; freights will be reduced, and corn will be shipped from St. Paul to the gulf at eight cents per bushel. These advantages alone would repay the cost of the improvements. What is \$50,000,000 or \$100,000,000 to such a vast work, and by so great a nation? Have not the nations of Europe spent millions of dollars to improve the Elbe, the Oder, the Rhine, the Danube and the Seine? And yet, have we not a greater nation, our people a mightier mission to fulfill, than was ever born beyond the Atlantic? Still timid men and politicians, empowered with the function of the statesman and legislators, hesitate to go forward in the development of the country, by making such improvements as the people and the nation demand for the best interest of each.

Is it unreasonable for the General Government to improve the great river system of the grand Valley of the Mississippi? Is not such a work essentially national? Most certainly it is! Then I would have the General Government organize a corps of the best engineers in the country—yes, in the world if need be. I would have them go up and down the navigable rivers of the valley, and make a thorough examination of every harbor, and the character of every stream, as well as the lands upon their shores. I would have them consult the merchants and river men, from St. Paul, Chicago, Pittsburg and Omaha to the gulf, and ascertain, as far as possible, what the present and future commerce of the valley, in conjunction with railways, demands. I would then have estimates made of the cost of the necessary improvements. And by the improvements necessary to be made, I do not mean any politician's job of snag-boat swindle, and sand-bar and rapids steals; but I mean the inauguration of a great system of improvement, in character and importance commensurate with the nation itself. A system of river improvements that will last for ages; which will be the work of statesmanship and science; an improvement that will unite the oceans, the



rivers, the lakes and the canals of North America, and enable the great ship of the sea to go through the land, like an amphibious monster, where commerce commands.

The character of the improvements agreed upon, and the cost ascertained, I would have Congress issue River Improvement bonds sufficient for the expense—\$100,000,000 if need be. I would have the bonds run fifty years. At the end of that time, 200,000,000 people will reside in the valley, ready and willing to pay the bonds, and thank God for the foresight and wisdom of the Congress that made the improvements. It would not be necessary to place all the bonds on the market at the same time, but only such installments as would be required from time to time to supply money for the prosecution of the work, each installment to run fifty years from time of sale. In the meantime, the burden of taxation, after the improvements are made, will fall infinitely below the profits that will accrue to the people by cheaper transportation.

But there is still another way by which the cost of improvement would come home to the people. The improvement of the Mississippi would necessarily drain and bring into use the alluvial lands lying along its shores and adjacent to it. The restoration of those lands alone would bring into existence more than double the cost of the entire improvement, though it be \$100,000,000. I quote from the report of Humphreys and Abbot, on the survey of the Mississippi, page 421, as follows :

“It may be well to exhibit, in this connection, with this approximate estimate of the cost of leveeing the alluvial regions, the extent and probable value of lands, which, thus protected from overflow, will be rendered available for cultivation. The area of those lands from Cape Girardeau to Red river is 19,450 square miles. It may be assumed that one-half of this area will be rendered cultivable, and as its value per acre may be set down at twenty-five dollars, the total will amount to \$160,000,000. The area of the alluvial land under cultivation below the mouth of Red river is not less than 1,000,000 acres, which at \$100 per acre, (by no means an extravagant estimate), gives \$100,000,000 for the value of the plantations in that section, making a total

value of \$260,000,000 for the land that will be rendered perpetually cultivable by the expenditure of \$17,000,000."

This calculation, you will bear in mind, is founded upon an advance in the price of only 7,000,000 acres of alluvial land, lying upon the lower Mississippi below Cairo and forms but a small portion of the alluvial lands that would be rendered valuable by the improvement of the rivers and the consequent confinement of their waters within their banks. But were there not a single acre to be reclaimed by the improvement, its necessity would still be paramount. And we all agree that the work shall be done by the General Government. And yet the impression pervades the public mind that the railroads of the country have a sufficient controlling power over Congress and the people, to prevent any improvement of the rivers, as long as their use is reckoned to be hostile to the railway interests. In addition to this impression, it is held, with no small amount of evidence for its foundation, that the capital and interest, on the Atlantic seaboard of our country, are hostile to the growth and independence of the West, and having control of the administration and legislation of the government, sharply contest all the national legislation designed to promote Western interests. And especially has it ever been the practice of the capitalists and statesmen of the Eastern cities and seaboard States, to hold the West in check, and make her a dependency upon Eastern capital and Eastern interests. Appropriations from the national treasury, designed for Western improvements, have always been grudgingly and diminutively made. But such a narrow policy cannot endure forever.

"For time at last sets all things even."

To-day the West is the vital portion of the national life, and I mean by the West the entire Mississippi Valley, from the lakes to the gulf. She supplies the materials for the fabrics of the country. From the West come most of the resources out of which the taxes to support the government are drawn. To the West belongs most of the population of the country, and to the West belongs a majority of the senators and representatives in the

Congress of the United States. And if a majority of them were statesmen instead of politicians, the West would not complain much longer about the unfair treatment of the East. Legislation and money would be given in abundance at the dictates of wisdom and statemanship, of commerce and civilization, if the West was rightly represented in the Congress of the United States. The time is at hand when we must look in another direction for the cause of our incompetent representatives, our incapacitated law-makers; we must look to the people; to them belong the responsibility, in a great measure, of choosing demagogues and fools to make the laws for the government and welfare of their country. We must have a new discussion of the great questions of our government and civilization. The people must be made to feel more than now the responsibility resting upon them, of choosing the law-makers of the country. The school-house, the college, the rostrum, the pulpit and the press must be made to ring with eloquence and reason, that will revolutionize the vulgar conception of the people, and revivify them with knowledge and sense of responsibility, one to another, and each to the whole.

But I have said that to the West already belongs a majority of the senators and representatives in Congress, and this being true, there must not be any delay about the legislation essential to Western interests.

In view of these facts, if the West fails in the future to get her share of national legislation, as well as appropriations, the fault will be in the people, who send incompetent men to Congress.

Having thus briefly considered a work of incalculable value to the commercial interests of the people of the Mississippi Valley, I would ask your attention to a higher consideration of the work, and the importance it is destined to subserve for the government of the people of North America.

I hold that the Mississippi and its tributaries are the greatest bonds of national union known to the people of the country.

Let us consider this statement for one moment. Here we have a river extending through thirty degrees of longitude and twenty-three degrees of latitude, and draining an area of 2,455,000 square miles—an area larger than all Europe, exclusive of Russia, Nor-

way and Sweden. It gathers its floods from the country between the upper lakes and the Rocky mountains. They are gathered from semi-arctic regions, and they flow through all the climates, a distance of 3,000 miles, there to be emptied into the Gulf Stream of a tropical sea, to be lost in the "dark and deep blue ocean."

This great river forms the boundary line of eleven populous and powerful States and two Territories. Upon its main stream and tributaries lie eighteen States and four Territories, large enough in themselves to form one of the mightiest nations on the face of the globe. It is a bond of common interest and political union, alike to the whole as it is to the parts. No one State or climate can appropriate it, to the exclusion of the others. It belongs alike to all, and is a mightier bond of national unity than the constitution itself. In the late civil strife, when the authority of the constitution was of no avail in a land of discordant and belligerent States, this mighty river, which binds the continent by the authority of Jehovah, mocked alike at friend and foe, and defied the passions of men, and supremely vindicated the unity of the States of the Republic as one and indivisible. As long as the waters run in the Mississippi from the north to the south, the country through which it runs will know but one government and one people, and be the unfailing servant of all. "Its annual overflow engulfs more wealth than the revenue of half of the petty kingdoms of the earth!" What a wonderful river! It wears the bright honors of unnumbered centuries. Its liquid volume moves undisturbed to the sea as at the dawn of création. It halts not in its course at the tread of empire. On its shores are the unwritten pages of more history than belongs to all the existing kingdoms of the world.

The traditionary empire of Hiawatha, extending over the valley of this grand river, is but the prophecy of that still mightier empire of the mound-builders, whose traces yet remain in the relentless hand of Time, and whose origin and decline prefigured in the then far-off future, the world's mightiest nation. This great river of the continent, though a new-comer to civilized man, is older than human things, is older than organic life. It was the parent and protector of millions of organic forms long

before the pyramids were built, and before the southern cross disappeared from the horizon of the Baltic. It floats, annually, upon its tributaries and main stream, more than \$200,000,000 of commerce, and in less than a century hence it will bear upon its bosom to the sea the commerce of 400,000,000 Saxon Americans.

What a wonderful river! No man can compute its importance to the North American people. What the Nile is to Egypt, what the great river Euphrates was to ancient Assyria, what the Ganges is to India, what the Yangtze is to China, what the Danube is to Europe, what the Amazon is to Brazil—all this, and even more than this, the Mississippi is to the North American continent. In an earlier period men would have worshipped the Mississippi; in this age we can do better—we can improve it. Then let us improve it; let us make a great ship canal, or ship river, if you please, from Chicago to the Gulf of Mexico, and thus make it worthy the respect and care of the active, earnest, and patriotic people of the American Union.

But there is still another sense in which this great river is a wonderful agent of civilization. It forms continued inland navigation with that of ocean navigation, which has proven in all ages to be a great civilizer of mankind. In every land where ocean navigation has been connected and extended into the interior, civilization has been promoted by the inter-communication of the people of one country with that of another. In this way, the Mississippi river is destined to subserve, in the future, a higher purpose than it has in the past, notwithstanding the great advantages it afforded to the earlier pioneers and explorers of the country.

There remains the third and last proposition of the subject to be considered. The future place of traffic for the people of the Mississippi Valley will be with South America and the tropical lands of the Western hemisphere.

The products of the earth and industry which create commerce are confined to special zones and climates, and are rendered more valuable as officiating ministers to human happiness when exchanged between people occupying regions of different temperature. This truth is demonstrated by the entire experience of the



human race. All the rich commerce of the world, since Joseph went down into Egypt, has grown out of an exchange of the products of the temperate for those of the tropical zones; and time has demonstrated to the people of every nation the necessity of sooner or later abandoning the pioneer, or East and West, path of human activity, and moving commerce upon longitudinal, instead of latitudinal lines, to secure the greatest rewards of industry. The same lessons of trade that experience has taught the people of other nations, the people of this great Mississippi basin must learn. A new commercial era, a new commercial destiny, now dawns upon the Western hemisphere. The tales of Marco Polo, the hopes of Columbus, and the Spaniard's dream of the El Dorado, will soon find fruition in the new land of Cathay.

“The lost Atlantides, that lay  
To ancient thought, beyond the waves away.”

The opening of a gateway to the Gulf of Mexico by Captain Eads, is the opening of a new commercial era of the Western hemisphere; a new commercial destiny that will invite all the people of the globe into its simple secrets, and place in the hands of Saxon America the control of the commerce of the world. Through the gateway to the gulf the future opens to the people of the Valley of the Mississippi, and they are now compelled to begin to learn the lesson before them, and turn away from old Europe, and seek new markets, if need be, of their own creation, in the tropical lands of the Western hemisphere.

There lies beyond the rule of our constitution, and south of us, an immense area of navigable waters, a gulf and a sea, destined to be the theater of the greatest marine commerce on the globe. It is studded with islands, rich in the wealth of nature, and struggling to take part in the affairs of the world. Still beyond and around lies a vast continent, pregnant with all that is great and grand, and valuable in nature. Those islands and waters and adjacent continent are our natural allies, and with us destined to be the world's conservators. For with us, under the new civilization, Europe and Asia are separated but still struggling under the old civilization, our people are diverted from their final goal to those distant continents in pursuit of commerce and wealth. We know

but little of those lands and waters of our own hemisphere that lie under and beyond the tropics ; our people should know more. They occupy a longitudinal position in the geography of the hemisphere, in their relation with the people of the valley, and will inevitably command the trade of the valley, in obedience to an all-controlling commercial law, that stimulated Alexander the Great to enrich his empire with the products of southern climes. That law moved from the Persian Gulf with the human tide of the world, and successively built up commercial centres on the Mediterranean, and from thence moved to the Netherlands, and now rules the commerce of England. This all-powerful commercial law is now being enacted upon the Western hemisphere, and in obedience to its sovereign power, and in the language of Mr. Beecher :

“The States of North America are to be the commercial centre of the globe. This destiny seems so inevitable that one hardly requires more than inspection of the map to perceive it. Both sides of the globe—the two hemispheres—are ours by our position ; for we are the land of two oceans. From our hither shore we hail the European and African continents ; from our thither shore we greet the Oceanica and Asiatic continents. And all between the oceans is our own ; to be filled with our own people, under common institutions, speaking our language.

“The interior structure of this continent peculiarly fits it to be the *mart of the globe*. Its rivers open the interior from almost every part, and give natural outlets ; its lakes are embosomed oceans, giving to the Northern frontier a third shore and an inland commerce scarcely less than the Atlantic or Pacific shore.

“Such artificial ways as are needed, especially the great thoroughfares from ocean to ocean—the inland highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific—are within our own bounds. We have no Prussia on our border, no Russia beyond her. Our vast interior is not grouped into national estates, blocking each other up and wasting each other’s means by monstrous armies of watch or attack.

“We can ask of commerce what she needs, and whether it is Northward or Southward, Eastward or Westward, her path lies among our own people.

“Shortly the carrying trade of the globe must be in our hands ! Upon our shores are the gates through which must pour the world’s merchandise.”

Such a commercial destiny as lies before the great people of the Mississippi basin, and their rapid increase to 100,000,000, and from thence to 600,000,000 population before the close of the twentieth century, commands the immediate action of those now living to adjust themselves to the new trade and the new commerce now growing up between the two continents of the Western hemisphere. Linked together by nature as these continents are, their people must be united by commercial relations, reciprocal in their character, and profitable in their results. Seeing these things to be true, we must conclude that the future growth in commerce and art of the people of the continents of the Western hemisphere, will depend upon the co-operative relations of the one with the other. And if we are wanting in examples to stimulate such high commercial adventure, we have only to refer back to an age when commerce began its final struggle with the military under the feudal power of old Europe and Western Asia. Five different routes successively opened and occupied from the Persian Gulf to the commercial marts of the Mediterranean were traveled, respectively to the East Indies, by the Phœnicians, the Jews, the merchant princes of Alexandria, Constantinople and of Venice. And if it be true that in an elder day cities and nations were enriched by the trade of the East Indies and Africa, how much greater must be the opportunity for the people of this great valley to enrich themselves by the trade of the West Indies, Central and South America.

The European farmer is the rival of the American farmer in the grain markets of the world, and the American manufacturer is fast becoming the rival of the European manufacturer.

The course of trade and the condition of the markets now open to the American manufacturer and farmer, demonstrate that we must earnestly seek for more profitable consumers, especially when, as in the case of Central and South America, they buy our productions with such of their own as we do not produce and are not competitors in any of our chosen fields of industry.

The people of the Mississippi Valley have, nearer home, a far richer and broader field for human activity than Europe affords,



which they have only to explore and cultivate, to make it an impregnable ally in trade and wealth, and not a rival.

While it is true that the general tendency of man upon the planet has been to make the circuit of the globe within lines of latitude of equal temperature, thus instinctively following the sun in his course around the earth, it is also true that the substantial wealth of all nations has been gathered, at least in past times, from the tropics. No people have become cosmopolitan and been vitalized by eclectic elements of civilization, who have not exchanged products with tropical climes, and between zones. *Sameness is not the law of progress. Variety is the eternal means of improvement.*

There is no advantage derived by the exchange of the potatoes of Colorado for those of Ohio, nor the wines of Missouri for those of California. Those are the products of the same domestic industry, and grow along the isothermal path of the human race.

It is by the exchange of the products of the tropics for those of the colder climates—the corn and wheat, the hardier fruits, and industrial arts of the North, for the cotton, the rice, the sugar, and the delicate fruits of the South, that our people are to be mostly benefitted in gathering the rewards of industry.

If we are wise we will study these facts, and organize them into the greatest commercial policy of our age and people.

They must be studied, understood and applied to the highest commercial interests of this country.

Let us no longer ignore these great facts which God has ordained, and to which the future millions of the two lands must conform.

We have completed the circuit of the globe. Upon our land the chain of the world's empire is made complete. Columbus and Humboldt carried the conquest forward to the rising and setting of the sun. Amazed at this triumph, the Anglo-American mind instinctively turns to new fields of conquest, and seeks for dominion on sea and land. What else can it do but to achieve its greatest possibilities in commerce, peaceful conquest, and

civilization? Nothing else remains to be done in this restless, grasping, conquering age.

Man's instinctive destiny upon the planet has been to make the circuit of the globe within lines of equal temperature with that of his birth-place. This movement is in obedience to a higher law—a law over which neither kings nor emperors have any control, for it is the same law which operates in the planetary and sidereal heavens, to direct the sun within the plane of the zodiac and bring the seasons in turn.

The westward movement of man along the path of empire corresponds to the movement of the sun in the zodiac. It is the movement of discovery and conquest. The second movement of man is at right angles with the path of empire, and corresponds to the second solar movement, known as the precession of the equinoxes. In the one case, the varying of the sun to the north and south, in his celestial pathway, the ecliptic, produces the seasons, and gives sensation and intellectual life to the lands and waters, and supplies fruits and flowers for the happiness and refinement of man. In the other case, the varying of the human race to the north and the south of the path of empire, produces the great wealth of the world, and advances civilization in every land. Therefore the people of the great States of the Valley of the Mississippi have only to live in obedience to this great law of nature to fulfil their mission in the affairs of the world.

Man's civil, cosmopolitan and commercial destiny is to conquer and triumph over the lands and oceans of the varied zones and climates of the earth. The American people have established their line of conquests from ocean to ocean, and thus demonstrated their ability to accomplish their instinctive destiny; they are now compelled to engage in their civil, cosmopolitan and commercial destiny. It is supremely important to the people of these great States of the valley that they hasten to realize that destiny, and earnestly set about its accomplishment. It commands the master might of mind. It involves the universal interests of races and nationalities. It involves national power and individual prosperity. Its fulfilment will be the grandest achievement of the race in the nineteenth century. It will be vitalized by the removal of the

American capital to the Valley of the Mississippi, the discovery of the north-west passage around the continent, and the full demonstration and realization of the Future Great City of the World. Let us hail this coming triumph, this possible achievement of our countrymen, with auspicious foreshadowings of a better time for the world's people.

The application and development of these truths will at once reorganize the present system of the exchange of products on the continent, and lessen the importance of east and west railways in their relation to those running north and south. This brings us to another statement made by a citizen of St. Louis before the senatorial committee. The question was asked by Senator Conkling, why railroads were built on latitudinal instead of longitudinal lines? The witness answered, "because latitude has grain and longitude has not." Now it seems to me that this is a singular statement, and especially when made in the face of all the knowledge in the world. I think that any scientific man will affirm that wheat and corn will grow on longitudinal as well as latitudinal lines, where the climate and soil are favorable. But if science won't do it, farmers will.

But I simply repeat the statement made by the gentleman of St. Louis, and leave it for others to criticise.

Our fathers landed upon the Atlantic seaboard of the continent, they there pitched their tents and made fixed habitations: They began to subdue the wilderness, to multiply and create wealth.

The army of pioneers began to organize. Their only field of activity lay westward across a broad continent. They took up their march and moved forward toward the setting sun, constantly carving empire from the wilderness. Soon the arts and means of civilization followed their footsteps. The mechanic arts, education and improvement followed the pioneer, soon to be succeeded by the railway. And thus as the pioneers went forth from the East to the West, so did the railway go forth from the East to the West. The westward movement caused the railways to be built upon latitudinal lines to facilitate the going to and from the parent home. The wealth was there, and those who possessed it built railroads for their own interest. This was a part of the work

done by the American people during the first century of our national life. There is now being inaugurated a new movement of civilization, for the people of the second century. This movement will build railroads and canals upon longitudinal lines, and establish harmony between the efforts of man and the purposes of nature.

And railways running from either of the great commercial centers of the Valley—Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, New Orleans, and other kindred cities, to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, will sink into far less relative importance than is now attached to them, in comparison with those running north and south and connecting the Lakes and the Gulf. In fact, one good railway, constructed to a good harbor on the Gulf of Mexico, will be of far greater value to any one of the cities of the Valley from which it may run, than any Pacific railway that can possibly be built. Besides, it must be evident that in less than ten years the trade of the West India Islands, Central and South America will be more valuable to the people of the Mississippi Valley than all the trade they will require with Europe and Asia. This may seem to some strange at first, but nevertheless, time will demonstrate it to be true. Understand me, I do not mean to say that the trade of the West India Islands, Central and South America will be greater than the combined trade of Europe and Asia, but I do mean to say that the time is not distant when the people of the Mississippi Valley will do more business with the West Indies, Central and South America than they will with Europe and Asia combined.

Let me explain. It may be assumed that by far the greater portion of our trade, at present, with Europe and Asia is confined to such fabrics and products as belong to climates that we possess, and that under these same climates are to be found, in North America, in greater abundance, those natural resources that Europe and Asia have in the same zones. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the time is not distant when the people will produce, from the same raw material, such fabrics, wares and implements as they may need in art and civilization, and hence will no longer be required to go abroad to Europe and Asia for such merchandise as can be produced at home. Then our people

will only be required to go to zones and climates that they do not possess, in the prosecution of trade with mankind. This will necessarily lead them to the tropical and semi-tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere, more than to any other portion of the globe; therefore another evidence of the commercial destiny of the Mississippi Valley, and the necessity of the surplus produce of the people of the valley following the flow of the waters to the gulf. Already our trade with the tropical and southern lands of the Western Hemisphere is rapidly growing, and to cultivate it requires favorable legislation and wise statesmanship at Washington.

No man can estimate our future trade with the South American States when these lands shall be more truly cultivated, and the soils and climates yield to their full capacity the necessities for man, most of which will find their way to the markets of the Valley of the Mississippi.

Beyond these continental considerations, if we consider whatever of trade the people of this valley must carry on with Europe and Asia, we readily conclude that it must be done through the Gulf of Mexico. The construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama as well as a railway to Panama, via the City of Mexico, will inevitably compel nine-tenths of the foreign trade destined for the people of the valley to reach them through those routes. The Gulf of Mexico and the Carribean sea must be the commercial waters of America, infinitely transcending, in special importance, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In short, they form the Mediterranean of the New World. And in the future growth and organization of the world's commerce, may we not reasonably expect that thousands of ships, from the Atlantic and Pacific—from the combined fleets of the nations of the earth—will associate in *rendezvous* in that world's commercial place which these two waters are destined to be? Every consideration in our geography and resources, as well as the rapid tendency to a complete organization of the world's commerce, points to this one great fact. The Mediterranean of the New World is just as surely to supersede, in commercial importance, the Mediterra-



nean of the Old World, as does the civilization of the New World supersede the civilization of the Old.

Our Mediterranean will yet have its Suez canal. It has its own Rome, its Constantinople, its Genoa and its Venice, its Smyrna and its Palermo. In short, to the Mediterranean of the Old World belongs scarcely anything of nature and civilization that does not belong to the Mediterranean of the New, whether in oceans east and west, or whether in continents north and south : or whether in islands and cities, in climates and peoples. Brilliant and eventful as is the long line of historic scenes which have been enacted upon the shores of the Mediterranean of the Old World, through thousands of years of man's history, growth and fall of nations, the commercial greatness, and the diffusion of the arts and sciences, —there seems to be reserved in the future, to be enacted upon the shores of the Mediterranean of the New World, still mightier deeds in commerce, in art, in PEACE ! Why may we not anticipate a superior and more advanced rehearsal of history ? Even now it is being enacted, and must go on.

“ From the Gulf of Mexico all the great commercial markets of the world are down hill. A vessel bound from that Gulf to Europe places herself in the current of the gulf stream and drifts along with it at the rate, for part of the way, of eighty or one hundred miles per day. If her destination be Rio, or India, or California, her course is the same as far north as the island of Bermuda.

“ And when there shall be established a commercial thoroughfare across the Isthmus, the trade-winds of the Pacific will place China, India, New Holland, and all the islands of that ocean, down hill also from this sea of ours. In that case, Europe must pass by our very doors, in the great highway of the markets both of the East and the West Indies.

“ This beautiful Mesopotamian sea is in a position to occupy the summit level of navigation, and to become the great commercial receptacle of the world. Our rivers run into it, and float down with their currents the surplus articles of merchandise that are produced upon the banks. Arrived with them upon the bosom of this grand marine basin, there are the currents of the sea and

the winds of heaven so arranged by Nature that they drift it and waft it down hill and down stream to the great market place of the world."

The configuration of the two lands, their climate, soils, natural products, navigable waters and intermediate islands, afford the strongest possible evidence of their alliance to each other, both in nature and civilization. And as nature has fixed the boundaries of each, and adapted their uses one for the other, it highly becomes civilized men, inhabiting the two lands and their islands, to form civil and commercial relations with each other in unison with the purposes of nature.

I am convinced that those climates and lands, with their incalculable resources and noble navigable waters, must be the future field of commercial enterprise for the Anglo-Saxon race—the American people—and that it is of the utmost importance to the people of the Mississippi Valley to look at once, with eagerness, to those countries, and to secure at the earliest moment intimate commercial relations with them.

Every consideration invites the people of this valley to the tropics of this continent, and admonishes them that their commercial destiny must be with the flow of the waters of the rivers of the valley.

Then it is that the future of this valley, which is destined to be the essential future of the civilization and the commercial activity of the Western hemisphere, depends upon the exchange of the products of the zones and climates of the Western continents, and the highest development of the commercial relations between the people of North and South America and the intervening lands. The continent having been spanned by a railway, the people of the great Valley States, controlled by an instinct, whose highest achievement is destiny, are now vaguely but truly looking toward the tropics for their future field of commercial activity. Railroads and steamships will soon be put in line, and capital brought into requisition, in the new and greater field of commerce.

And from this great valley will go forth captains and generals with armies, to traverse again, in peaceful conquest, the battle-

fields of Pizarro and Cortez, and fructify the lands of Aztecs and the Incas.

The mission of our people is now being rapidly defined, and from their course there can be "neither variableness nor shadow of turning." Our commerce, when properly organized in its legitimate channels of usefulness, must follow the rivers, and our people who drink the waters of the Arkansas, the Illinois, the Ohio, the Missouri and the Mississippi, must be kindred in interest and prosperity with those who drink the waters of the Orinoco, the Rio de la Plata, the Parana and the Amazon.

With the achievement of continental conquest will be established the most perfect commercial relationship between the zones and climates of the Western continents, North and South America.

"No ship that sails from either shore,  
While to and fro it plies,  
But weaves the thread of friendship o'er  
The Gulf that 'twixt us lies."

Let no man be blind to the commercial destiny of this people. Let no man console himself with the hope of some vague speculation, in which this people will waste their time and their substance, by foolishly asking for profits and prosperity along the beaten track of conservatism and superstition, wandering east and west along parallel lines of equal temperature, with the rising and setting sun. No such absurdity awaits the Anglo-Saxon blood. Its mission is more than this. It is to combine in one universal relationship the zones and climates of extremes of heat and cold; to gather the wonders and the wealth of torrid and frigid lands.

Realizing that such a destiny awaits the people of this valley, is it not the part of wisdom to so shape the schemes of ambition, of speculation, of industry, of improvement, and of commerce, as to carry out the purpose of the Divine, in the application of the economic uses of all those interests which are destined to contribute to their progress and the greatness of our nation?

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